

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A motorcycle, comprising:  
  
a vehicle body frame;  
  
a swing arm supported at a front end portion thereof for rocking motion on said vehicle body frame;  
  
an axle of a rear wheel supported for rotation at a rear end of said swing arm;  
  
a cylinder head, said cylinder head being provided on an engine body, said engine body being supported on said vehicle body frame forwardly of said rear wheel;  
  
an exhaust system connected to said cylinder head, a rear end exhaust portion of ~~an~~ said exhaust system ~~connected to said cylinder head is~~ being disposed at a position higher than said axle; and  
  
an exhaust control valve for adjusting ~~the~~ a flow area in an exhaust pipe, which forms part of said rear end exhaust portion of said exhaust system, is disposed in said exhaust pipe,  
  
wherein said exhaust control valve is disposed forwardly and upwardly of said axle of said rear wheel.

2. (Currently Amended) The motorcycle according to claim 1, wherein in a low or medium speed rotational region of the engine, said exhaust control valve is operated to ~~the~~ a closing side in order to utilize an exhaust gas pulsation effect in the exhaust system to raise ~~the~~ an output power of the engine, and in a high speed rotational region of the engine, the exhaust control valve is operated to ~~the~~ an opening side in order to reduce ~~the~~ an exhaust gas flow resistance in the exhaust system to raise the output power of the engine.

3. (Original) The motorcycle according to claim 1, wherein the exhaust control valve is located in an increased diameter portion of the rear end exhaust portion.

4. (Original) The motorcycle according to claim 3, wherein the exhaust control valve is secured to a valve shaft supported for rotation on the increased diameter portion of the rear end exhaust portion.

5. (Original) The motorcycle according to claim 4, wherein a bearing housing having a bottomed cylindrical shape is securely mounted on the increased diameter portion, and the valve shaft is supported at one end thereof on the bearing housing through a first seal member.

6. (Currently Amended) The motorcycle according to claim 5, wherein ~~the other~~ another end of the valve shaft projects from the increased diameter portion with a second seal member interposed between the increased diameter portion and the valve shaft, and a driven pulley is secured to the projecting end of the valve shaft.

7. (Currently Amended) An exhaust system for a motorcycle, comprising:  
an exhaust pipe, said exhaust pipe being connectable to an engine of the motorcycle, a rear end exhaust portion of the exhaust pipe being mountable at a position higher than an axle of a rear wheel of the vehicle; and

an exhaust control valve for adjusting ~~the~~ a flow area in ~~the~~ said exhaust pipe, said exhaust control valve being disposed in said rear end exhaust portion of said exhaust pipe,

wherein said exhaust control valve is disposed forwardly and upwardly of the axle of said rear wheel.

8. (Currently Amended) The exhaust system according to claim 7, wherein in a low or medium speed rotational region of the engine, said exhaust control valve is operated to ~~the~~ a closing side in order to utilize an exhaust gas pulsation effect in the exhaust system to raise ~~the~~ an output power of the engine, and in a high speed rotational region of the engine, the exhaust control valve is operated to ~~the~~ an opening side in order to reduce ~~the~~ an exhaust gas flow resistance in the exhaust system to raise the output power of the engine.

9. (Original) The exhaust system according to claim 7, wherein the exhaust control valve is located in an increased diameter portion of the rear end exhaust portion.

10. (Original) The exhaust system according to claim 9, wherein the exhaust control valve is secured to a valve shaft supported for rotation on the increased diameter portion of the rear end exhaust portion.

11. (Original) The exhaust system according to claim 10, wherein a bearing housing having a bottomed cylindrical shape is securely mounted on the increased diameter portion, and

the valve shaft is supported at one end thereof on the bearing housing through a first seal member.

12. (Currently Amended) The exhaust system according to claim 11, wherein ~~the~~ another end of the valve shaft projects from the increased diameter portion with a second seal member interposed between the increased diameter portion and the valve shaft, and a driven pulley is secured to the projecting end of the valve shaft.

13. (Currently Amended) A motorcycle, comprising:  
an axle of a rear wheel supported for rotation at a rear end of a swing arm;  
an exhaust pipe, said exhaust pipe being connectable to an engine of the motorcycle, a rear end exhaust portion of the exhaust pipe being mounted at a position higher than an axle of a rear wheel of the vehicle; and

an exhaust control valve for adjusting ~~the~~ a flow area in ~~the~~ said exhaust pipe, said exhaust control valve being disposed in said rear end exhaust portion of said exhaust pipe,

wherein said exhaust control valve is disposed forwardly and upwardly of the axle of said rear wheel.

14. (Currently Amended) The motorcycle according to claim 13, wherein in a low or medium speed rotational region of the engine, said exhaust control valve is operated to ~~the~~ a closing side in order to utilize an exhaust gas pulsation effect in the exhaust system to raise ~~the~~ an output power of the engine, and in a high speed rotational region of the engine, the exhaust

control valve is operated to ~~the~~ an opening side in order to reduce ~~the~~ an exhaust gas flow resistance in the exhaust system to raise the output power of the engine.

15. (Original) The motorcycle according to claim 13, wherein the exhaust control valve is located in an increased diameter portion of the rear end exhaust portion.

16. (Original) The motorcycle according to claim 15, wherein the exhaust control valve is secured to a valve shaft supported for rotation on the increased diameter portion of the rear end exhaust portion.

17. (Original) The motorcycle stem according to claim 16, wherein a bearing housing having a bottomed cylindrical shape is securely mounted on the increased diameter portion, and the valve shaft is supported at one end thereof on the bearing housing through a first seal member.

18. (Currently Amended) The motorcycle according to claim 17, wherein ~~the other~~ another end of the valve shaft projects from the increased diameter portion with a second seal member interposed between the increased diameter portion and the valve shaft, and a driven pulley is secured to the projecting end of the valve shaft.

19. (New) The motorcycle according to claim 1, wherein said exhaust control valve is located in said exhaust pipe between a first muffler and a second muffler of said exhaust system.

20. (New) The motorcycle according to claim 1, wherein said exhaust control valve is located in said exhaust pipe at a location rearward of the cylinder head.

21. (New) The exhaust system according to claim 7, wherein said exhaust control valve is located in said rear end exhaust portion of said exhaust pipe between a first muffler and a second muffler of the exhaust system.

22. (New) The exhaust system according to claim 7, wherein said exhaust control valve is located in said rear end exhaust portion of said exhaust pipe at a location rearward of the engine.

23. (New) The motorcycle according to claim 13, wherein said exhaust control valve is located in said rear end exhaust portion of said exhaust pipe between a first muffler and a second muffler of the exhaust system.

24. (New) The motorcycle according to claim 13, wherein said exhaust control valve is located in said exhaust pipe at a location rearward of the engine.